



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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JULY 15, 2005

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FORMER SHERIFF CANDIDATE PLEADS GUILTY TO ILLEGAL FIREARMS

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Rocky Comfort, Mo., man who was a candidate for sheriff in McDonald County, Mo., last year, pleaded guilty in federal court today to illegally possessing a firearm.

Randy Alan Hance, 45, of Rocky Comfort, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Richard E. Dorr this morning to the charge contained in a Dec. 16, 2004, federal indictment.

By pleading guilty, **Randy Hance** admitted that he was subject to a court order that prohibited him from harassing, stalking and threatening his ex-wife, Connie Hance, and otherwise engage in conduct that would place her in reasonable fear of bodily injury, at the time he was in possession of several firearms and ammunition.

On Nov. 24, 2004, officers of the McDonald County, Mo., Sheriff's Department along with the South Central Drug Task Force responded to a call that **Randy Hance** was near the home of Connie Hance. Officers had a warrant for his arrest, Graves said, based on previous violations of the order of protection.

Upon arresting **Randy Hance**, officers located a Beretta .40-caliber pistol, a Remington 12-gauge shotgun, and ammunition: 30 rounds of 30-30 gauge rifle ammunition, 46 rounds of 20-gauge shotgun ammunition, 53 rounds of 12-gauge shotgun ammunition, 14 rounds of 260-caliber rifle ammunition and 20 rounds of 250-caliber rifle ammunition. In a search of his trailer, officers also located a Ruger M77 rifle.

Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who is subject to a court protection order to be in possession of any firearms or ammunition. Under the terms of today's plea agreement, **Randy Hance** also agreed to relinquish ownership of the firearms and

ammunition to the government.

Under federal statutes, **Randy Hance** could be subject to a sentence of up to 10 years in federal prison without parole, plus a fine up to \$250,000. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the United States Probation Office.

This case is being prosecuted by Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Angela C. Hasty. It was investigated by the McDonald County, Mo., Sheriff's Department, the Southwest Missouri Drug Task Force and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at
www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow